

Submitter: Anahi Cervantes

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

Measure: HB4077

February 2nd, 2022

To: House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

From: Anahi Cervantes, Medford, OR

Re: Environmental Justice and HB 2077

Email: cervantesanahi3@gmail.com

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Brock Smith, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 4077. My name is Anahi Cervantes, I live in Medford Oregon and I am passionate about policy that pushes forward environmental justice for all Oregonians. As a field worker myself, I know what it's really like out there. Unfortunately, people aren't aware of what's really happening in our environment because they either don't know where to get information or who to go to when it comes to environmental racism. Us field workers are out there in the heat, rain, snow, etc. yet something as simple as clean water and bathroom breaks are unfortunately denied to many of my fellow field workers. We as a community also need to be informed of the long term effects of exposure to pesticides and smoke. This past summer we were exposed to both and that takes a toll on our health, considering it could lead to long term effects like asthma. We're facing a pandemic which has left so many people more vulnerable than ever before and it's just too much.

The wildfires are one of the most visible impacts of climate change here in the valley, specifically the Almeda fire from last year. After the fire, all we wanted and desperately needed was peace but instead we were faced with a horrible summer with the worst smoke we've probably ever had in the valley. This year as summer is approaching we are all facing the anxiety over the fact that we don't know if there's going to be wildfires, we don't know where we're going to go if there are more wildfires, we don't know how to protect ourselves or our loved ones. We don't have anywhere to run. Fighting for environmental justice means fighting against environmental racism. The communities like ours that have had to continue enduring these extreme circumstances despite everything that continues to affect us need assistance, it's a need. The only people who know what it's like to work as farm workers are us, the voices of the weak must be heard.